

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 7 and 10 are pending in the present application. Claims 7 and 10 have been amended. Claims 6, 8 and 9 have been canceled.

Drawings

As requested in the Amendment dated November 4, 2005, the Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge receipt and acceptance of the drawing Replacement Sheet initially filed on March 22, 2005. The Examiner is also respectfully requested to acknowledge that the objection to the drawings under 37 C.F.R.1.83(a) as presented in the Office Action dated December 22, 2004, has been withdrawn.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 6, 8 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Numata et al. reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,043,536).

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants respectfully note the Examiner's acknowledgment that claims 1-4 are allowed.

Applicants also respectfully note the Examiner's acknowledgment that claims 7 and 10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be

allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In view of the acknowledgement of allowable subject matter, claims 7 and 10 have been amended to be in independent form, merely to advance prosecution of this application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge that claims 7 and 10 are allowed.

Conclusion

As noted above, claims 7 and 10 have been amended merely to be in independent form. Since claims 7 and 10 have been amended directly responsive to the acknowledgement of allowable subject matter, consideration and entry of this Amendment should not be an undue burden.

Moreover, claims 7 and 10 have been amended to be in independent form, rather than to further distinguish over the relied upon prior art. This should be especially clear in view of the acknowledgement of allowable subject matter. Accordingly, the amendment to claims 7 and 10 should not be construed as narrowing scope within the meaning of *Festo*.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the corresponding rejection, and to pass the claims of the present application to issue, for at least the above reasons.

In the event that there are any outstanding matters remaining in the present application, please contact Andrew J. Telesz, Jr. (Reg. No. 33,581) at (571) 283-0720

in the Washington, D.C. area, to discuss these matters.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment for any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-0238.

Respectfully submitted,

VOLENTINE FRANCOS & WHITT, P.L.L.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew J. Telesz, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

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